Patent Claims

1. An apparatus for producing and filling sausage meat, comprising:

   - a producing station (29) for producing sausage meat,
   - a filling station (12a, 12b, 12c) for filling the sausage meat produced by said producing station,

   characterized by

   - a means (30a, 30b, 30c) for determining the amount of sausage meat needed by said filling station (12a, 12b, 12c), and
   - a control means (15) which controls the sausage meat output of said sausage-meat producing station (29) on the basis of the determined amount of needed sausage meat between the deactivation stage and the full load stage in at least one further intermediate stage in which the sausage meat output rate of said producing station (29) lies between the rates of a deactivated producing station and a full-load driven producing station.

2. The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said control means (15) is designed such that the sausage meat output of said sausage-meat producing station (29) is controlled substantially continuously on the basis of the amount of sausage meat needed by said filling station (12a, 12b, 12c).

3. The apparatus according to claim 1 or 2, wherein at least one reservoir (9) for storing sausage meat is provided between said sausage-meat producing station (29) and said filling station (12a, 12b, 12c).

4. The apparatus according to any one of claims 1 to 3, wherein a means (30a, 30b, 30c) for determining the amount of sausage meat needed is provided such that the sausage meat throughput of said sausage-meat filling station (12a, 12b, 12c) is sensed for determining the amount of sausage meat needed.

5. The apparatus according to any one of claims 1 to 4, wherein at least one pipe (10) for transporting sausage meat is provided between said sausage-meat producing station (29) and said filling station (12a, 12b, 12c).

6. The apparatus according to any one of claims 1 to 5, wherein said sausage-meat producing station (29) comprises a grinder (23) whose throughput is controlled by said control means (15).

7. The apparatus according to any one of claims 1 to 6, wherein said sausage-meat producing station comprises at least one mixer (4) whose sausage meat throughput is controlled by said control means (15).

8. The apparatus according to any one of claims 1 to 7, wherein said sausage-meat producing station (29) comprises at least one evacuator (6, 24) whose sausage meat throughput is controlled by said control means (15).

9. The apparatus according to any one of claims 1 to 8, wherein said sausage-meat producing station (29) comprises at least one pump (4, 6, 24) whose sausage meat throughput is controlled by said control means (15).

10. The apparatus according to any one of claims 1 to 9, wherein said sausage-meat producing station (29) comprises an emulsifier (25) whose sausage meat throughput is controlled by said control means (15).

11. The apparatus according to any one of claims 1 to 10, wherein said sausage-meat producing station (29) comprises a pre-chopper (2) whose throughput is controlled by said control means (15).

12. The apparatus according to any one of claims 1 to 11, wherein a plurality of filling stations (12a, 12b, 12c) are provided.

13. The apparatus according to claim 12, wherein at least one reservoir (13a, 13b, 13c) is provided for each filling station (12a, 12b, 12c).

14. The apparatus according to any one of claims 12 or 13, wherein for each filling station (12a, 12b, 12c) at least one means (30a, 30b, 30c) is provided for determining the amount of sausage meat needed by the respective filling station (12a, 12b, 12c).

15. The apparatus according to any one of claims 1 to 14, wherein the sausage meat produced is transported under exclusion of air and under pressure at least in part from said sausage-meat producing station (29) into said filling station (12a, 12b, 12c).

16. A method for producing and filling the sausage meat produced, **characterized in** that,

on the basis of the amount of sausage meat needed by the filling process, sausage meat is ejected in the producing process at least at a rate which lies between the rate of a deactivated producing process and a full-load producing process.

17. The method according to claim 16, wherein, in response to the amount of sausage meat needed in the filling process of the sausage-meat producing process, sausage meat is ejected at a rate which is adjustable substantially continuously.

18. The method according to any one of claims 16 or 17, wherein the sausage meat output of the producing process is controlled on the basis of the amount of sausage meat needed in the filling process.

19. The method according to any one of claims 16 to 18, wherein the sausage meat is stored after production and prior to filling.

20. The method according to claim 19, wherein for the determination of the amount of sausage meat needed a measurement is carried out as to how much sausage meat is stored.

21. The method according to any one of claims 16 to 20, wherein for the determination of the amount of sausage meat needed, the sausage meat throughput of the sausage-meat filling station is sensed.

22. The method according to any one of claims 16 to 21, wherein the sausage-meat producing process is carried out such that a minimally necessary amount of sausage meat is stored.